

## BLOOMINGTON YESTERDAY

### FARMING IS A FAMILY TRADITION FOR LOCAL RESIDENT

**A**nker Christensen will always be known as the prolific farmer, bricklayer and contractor who helped lay Bloomington's foundation. If you owned a brick home around 90th Street and Humboldt in the 1950s, chances are, Christensen laid the bricks. Yet Christensen's daughter Lilly, also has a place in Bloomington's history books, as owner and operator of the popular Schermerhorn Nursery, one of the first nurseries in Bloomington.

For nearly two decades, beginning around 1950, Lilly and her husband Kingsley, along with their four children, operated the Schermerhorn Nursery. Open for business year-round, the nursery specialized in everything from sod and fertilizer to cut flowers and house plants to farm equipment and fire wood.

The Schermerhorn family even provided snowplowing services to residents during the long winter months. During their busiest summer



months, Schermerhorn estimates they had 25 people working at the nursery.

"Growing up on a farm, the nursery business came natural to me," Schermerhorn said. "Although it was hard work, we sure had fun and made a good time of it while it lasted."

## SOUTH LOOP VISION COMES ALIVE

### PLANS MOVE FORWARD FOR BLOOMINGTON DESTINATION

**S**outh Loop, the area in east Bloomington that extends from TH77 on the west to I-494 on the north and to the Minnesota River on the south and east, will be undergoing some major changes aimed at transforming the district into a model for sustainable commerce and living.

The *South Loop District Plan* encourages mixed-use living and working communities with excellent transit access. The City plans to transform the large street grid and streetscape to be smaller and more pedestrian friendly, with improved access to major destinations in the district. Additional highlights from the plan include:

#### Lindau Lane greenway

Lindau Lane will be extended from 24th Avenue to Bloomington Central Station to improve accessibility and encourage the use of alternative transportation such as biking and light rail transit.

According to Community Development Director Larry Lee, extending Lindau Lane will serve as a catalyst for development, connect the Mall of America (MOA) and



Bloomington Central Station, and create a more desirable place that will be attractive to residents, businesses and the hospitality industry.

"Creating smaller, more livable blocks encourages walking, while still preserving natural and industrial areas and encouraging transit use," Lee said.

A greenway on Lindau Lane will serve as a gathering place for the community and connect the district's two signature developments – MOA and Bloomington Central Station.

#### New residential neighborhood

The area around the intersection of 34th Avenue and American Boulevard is envisioned as a new residential neighborhood with up to 3,500 multi-family dwellings. Residents of the area will have the unique advantage of being close to two light rail transit stations with easy access to the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

#### 24th Avenue gateway

Streetscape improvements, a major renovation of the Mall of America transit station and new buildings lining 24th Avenue will transform the appearance of this important street. Greenery along the sidewalks will add to the street's appeal and filter rainwater.

#### The bluffs and above

A partnership between the City and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will preserve the natural beauty of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Access for pedestrians and bicyclists will be improved.

The *map above* illustrates some of the key design concepts for the district.

Final recommendations and concepts for the *South Loop District Plan* will be presented to the City Council in the spring. For more information, visit the City's website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SOUTH LOOP.**

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When you see **WEBSITE KEYWORDS**, go to [www.ci.bloomington.mn.us](http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us) for more information.



## RAMBLER REDO SERIES ON THE WEB

### EXPERT ADVICE AND TIPS FOR REMODELING YOUR HOME

**T**he Rambler Redo series that you've enjoyed in the *Briefing* now has its own page on the City's website. The *Rambler Redo* series will show you how to address some of the more common updating and remodeling issues in one of the coolest and most popular types of homes in Bloomington: the rambler.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: RAMBLER REDO.**

## COME INSIDE AT DWAN CLUBHOUSE OPEN YEAR-ROUND

**T**he weather may not be appropriate for golf, but there's plenty to do inside at the Dwan clubhouse, 3301 West 110th Street. The clubhouse serves breakfast and lunch. Card players are welcome. Winter hours are Monday - Friday, 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. For more information, call 952-563-8702.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: DWAN.**

## RECYCLE OLD THERMOSTATS

### HENNEPIN COUNTY FACILITY OFFERING \$5 GIFT CARD

**D**id you know you can save energy and money by replacing your traditional thermostat with a programmable one? Recycle your old thermostat by bringing it to the South Hennepin Recycling and Problem Waste Drop-Off Center, 1400 West 96th Street. Traditional thermostats contain dangerous mercury and must be recycled. **Drop off your old thermostat by March 31** and receive a \$5 Menards gift card. For more information, visit [www.hennepin.us/dropoffs](http://www.hennepin.us/dropoffs).



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LOOKING TO THE FUTURE  
BUILDING ON OUR COMMUNITY’S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

By Mayor Gene Winstead

In the past year, you may have heard several, sometimes contradictory, statements that may have left you a bit confused about how the Bloomington you live in and enjoy compares competitively with other large communities.

Bloomington has been home to people for centuries, from the Native Americans living on the Minnesota River bluff to farming communities and small settlements to the traditional suburbs that grew out of World War II. In the 1960s a decision was made to take advantage of Bloomington’s central location near highways, while creating a balance of residential and commercial/ industrial development. Today, that goal has been achieved. Residential properties represent half of the community’s tax base.

As a City Council, we look to continue renewing our community by building on the competitive advantage we have today, which is a result of past City Councils’ work to be a more economically, fiscally, environmentally and socially sustainable community.



This next year, some major district improvements will move forward, including the South Loop District, an important commercial and employment center located immediately south of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, *see page 1*, and the Penn-American District, *see page 3*, located on Penn Avenue and American Boulevard, which will include a mix of retail, office

and residential spaces. Improvements to the Hwy. 169 and I-494 interchange began this past fall, *see page 3*.

Our community vitality is further evidenced by ongoing investment in the city over the past several years, as reflected in the number of building permits drawn and inspections conducted in 2010. The number of inspections in 2010 was slightly over 19,000 – 93 percent of the 5-year average total inspections, ranging from 8 - 16 inspections per day, depending on the workload of inspectors. Our goal is to have the services we provide, from a property tax and water/sewer utility fees standpoint, remain very competitive. As noted in several 2010 *Briefing* columns, Bloomington is among the most competitive cities in terms of cost and quality. The property tax cost of City services for a single-family lot is just under \$80 per month. If you pay more or less than that monthly amount, it is the result of a Minnesota property tax system that spreads the city’s property tax cost to properties based on the proportional market value of the type of property. (A median valued home pays \$67.82 per month.) In these more difficult economic times, many of us would like to reduce our overall tax load. Given that property taxes support many City services, a significant reduction in property taxes should be accompanied by a concurrent, strategic reduction in services so that we do not incur costs today that will burden future generations. As a Council, we prioritize property tax-supported services to determine if adjustments to services are necessary.

For 2011, while many of our city counterparts held their levies flat or increased them, Bloomington approved a slight reduction to the levy compared to 2010. Strong financial management and keeping service levels during better times at levels that could be supported during more difficult times, allows the City to continue to provide the

services you rely on. There has been little downturn in our service demands, as is typical of past downturns, and the demand for some City services has increased. Although other government agencies, such as Hennepin County, may provide a few similar services, having them available locally offers many benefits at a cost of under 5 percent of your City property tax bill. For example, the City is able to more than quadruple its investment in public health services for the community by leveraging grants, contracts, fees for services and other funding sources, greatly expanding the level of service available to Bloomington residents. While many of our financial assets are dedicated to specific purposes such as infrastructure renewal, using City assets to lower property taxes in the short term could cost us our AAA bond rating, the highest rating available, which allows us to borrow money at very good rates, including some at less than our investment assets are earning. Moreover, we are using the expected positive performance from 2010 to fund our 2011 fire pension obligation for volunteer firefighters avoiding the use of property taxes to fund it in 2012 - 2016, which would be the situation if the City were to issue debt.

Short term reactions can end up costing all of us in the long term. Ultimately, the services that you pay for through your property taxes support the investment you have made in this community and are often a savings over what it would cost you to pay for these services individually or to go without them, thereby increasing your insurance costs. As we look forward to 2011 and beyond, we see continued investment by people in the homes and businesses in our community as well as investments in areas such as Penn-American and South Loop. These investments strengthen the City and benefit us all.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: JUST THE FACTS.

Additional changes to the Animal Ordinance include regulations to help prevent nuisance conditions such as odors, noise, and attracting vermin and predators.

“The City hopes that these restructured regulations will allow residents who own large single-family lots to continue raising chickens in a manner that respects neighboring properties,” Moore said.

For more information on the Animal Ordinance, call Environmental Health Manager Lynn Moore at 952-563-8970 or visit the City’s website at [www.ci.bloomington.mn.us/code](http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us/code) and navigate to Chapter 12.

Volume 19, Number 1

The *Briefing*, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8819; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; [E-MAIL\\_jhill@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:E-MAIL_jhill@ci.bloomington.mn.us). Website: [www.ci.bloomington.mn.us](http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us)

BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL



**Mayor**  
Gene Winstead  
952-888-1258 (h)  
952-563-8782 (w)  
[gwinstead@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:gwinstead@ci.bloomington.mn.us)

**Councilmember At Large**  
Amy Grady  
952-884-6502 (h)  
[agrady@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:agrady@ci.bloomington.mn.us)



**Councilmember At Large**  
Karen Nordstrom  
952-831-5221 (h)  
[knordstrom@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:knordstrom@ci.bloomington.mn.us)

**Councilmember District I**  
Steve Peterson  
952-884-3262 (h)  
[speterson@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:speterson@ci.bloomington.mn.us)



**Councilmember District II**  
Tom Hulting  
952-942-9164 (h)  
[thulting@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:thulting@ci.bloomington.mn.us)

**Councilmember District III**  
Steve Elkins  
612-578-2103 (c)  
[selkins@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:selkins@ci.bloomington.mn.us)



**Councilmember District IV**  
Vern Wilcox  
952-854-1425 (h)  
[vwilcox@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:vwilcox@ci.bloomington.mn.us)

Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

COUNCILMEMBERS

[council@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:council@ci.bloomington.mn.us)

CITY MANAGER

Mark Bernhardson 952-563-8780  
[citymanager@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:citymanager@ci.bloomington.mn.us)

DIRECTORS

Larry Lee, <i>Community Development</i>	952-563-8947
<a href="mailto:llee@ci.bloomington.mn.us">llee@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	
Diann Kirby, <i>Community Services</i>	952-563-8717
<a href="mailto:communityservices@ci.bloomington.mn.us">communityservices@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	
Lori Economy-Scholler, <i>Finance</i>	952-563-8791
<a href="mailto:finance@ci.bloomington.mn.us">finance@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	
Ulie Seal, <i>Fire</i>	952-881-4062
<a href="mailto:fire@ci.bloomington.mn.us">fire@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	
Kent Michaelson, <i>Human Resources</i>	952-563-4898
<a href="mailto:kmichaelson@ci.bloomington.mn.us">kmichaelson@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	
Sandra Johnson, <i>Legal</i>	952-563-4895
<a href="mailto:legal@ci.bloomington.mn.us">legal@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	
Jeffrey Potts, <i>Police</i>	952-563-8601
<a href="mailto:police@ci.bloomington.mn.us">police@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	
Karl Keel, <i>Public Works</i>	952-563-8731
<a href="mailto:publicworks@ci.bloomington.mn.us">publicworks@ci.bloomington.mn.us</a>	

General phone number 952-563-8700

The City of Bloomington complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. For more information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; 952-563-8733 (Voice); 952-563-8740 (TTY).

Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.

CHANGES MADE TO CITY ANIMAL ORDINANCE  
NEW REGULATIONS FOR BACKYARD CHICKENS FINALIZED

The City updated its regulations for animals in residential neighborhoods to reflect the significant changes since Bloomington’s early years as a farming community.

According to Environmental Health Manager Lynn Moore, last spring the City discovered that several Bloomington residents had chickens on their properties. After researching other cities’ ordinances and hosting public hearings on the proposed animal ordinance changes, the regulations were approved. The Council voted to continue to allow chickens to be kept on residential lots that meet certain standards.

Chickens must be kept in a clean shelter, no larger than 120 square feet. The shelter (coop) and enclosure (run) must be at least 50 feet from all neighboring property lines. Shelters and enclosures must be screened from view by a minimum of a four-foot high solid fence.

The owners of the chickens must occupy the home on the property where chickens are kept and chickens cannot be kept inside the home or garage. The new regulations also limit the number of chickens a resident can keep to four hens and prohibit roosters, cockfighting, slaughtering and breeding.



FINANCIAL UPDATE  
CITY COUNCIL APPROVES 2011 PROPERTY TAX LEVY

In an effort to maintain an affordable price for City services, the City Council adopted a property tax levy for 2011 of \$44,552,753, a decrease of 0.12 percent from 2010. Other communities in Hennepin County either had no increase or up to an 8 percent increase in their levies.

Based on this tax levy, the City’s portion of 2011 total residential property taxes is approximately 29 percent.

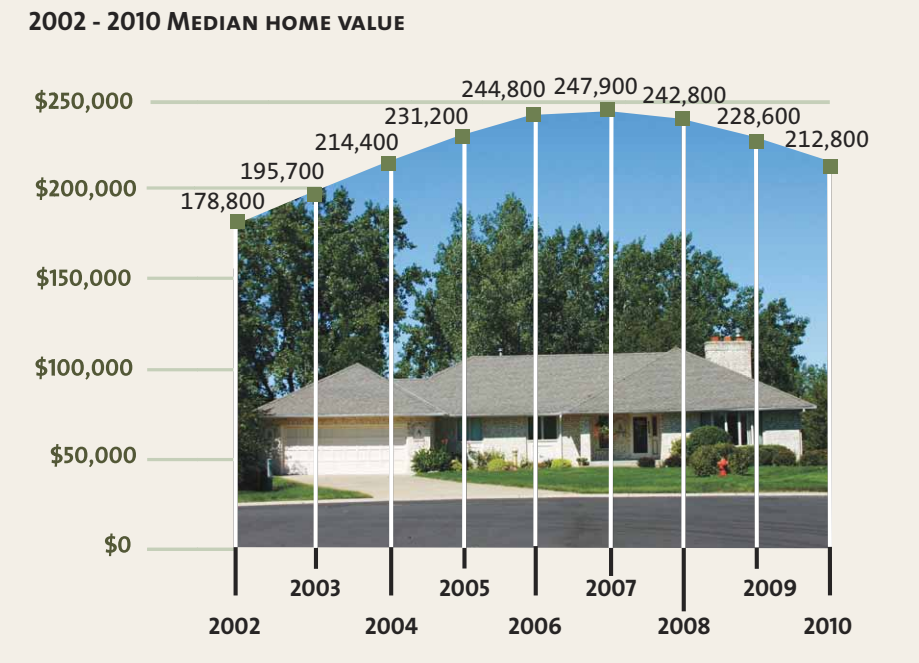
The City’s objective is to maintain the monthly cost of City services for the owner of a median value home, which for 2011 is \$212, 800, at the same level as 2010 – \$67.82.

Some homeowners saw the value of their properties decrease and their portions of local taxes increase. This is because there is not a direct correlation between property values and property taxes as there is between sales and

income taxes. Governments in Minnesota levy a total property tax dollar amount; they do not set the tax rate, as found in some states. In the property tax system, market value is used to create a proportionate share of the tax levy. In other words, a person’s tax bill is a factor of how all other properties in the city change in value. The average residential property decreased in value for taxes payable in 2011. The tax for a median value home with the approved levy should stay flat compared to the 2010 tax. If your property maintained its value better than the average property, your share of the tax levy most likely showed an increase.

Home sales in 2009 reflect the housing downturn and are the basis for the 2010 assessment for taxes payable in 2011. Home sales in 2010 will be the basis for 2012 taxes. Total market value for all Bloomington properties was at \$11.8 billion for taxes payable in 2009, dropped to \$11.2 billion for 2010 and to \$10.3 billion for 2011.

For more information, contact Chief Financial Officer Lori Economy-Scholler at 952-563-8791 or [leconomy@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:leconomy@ci.bloomington.mn.us).



TRAFFIC SAFETY  
RIGHT-OF-WAY RULES

With so many different kinds of intersections, sometimes it is difficult to remember who has the right-of-way. Most drivers know the rules of a stop-controlled intersection, but uncontrolled, circular and t-intersections can be confusing.

Here is a review of the rules to help avoid those baffling situations:

Four-way uncontrolled

- Vehicles in the intersection and entering ahead of you have the right-of-way.
- If you arrive at the same time, the car to the right has the right-of-way.

T-intersection

- Vehicles on the through road have the right-of-way.

Circular intersection

- Vehicles already in the circle have the right-of-way; incoming cars must yield.

For more information, call Civil Engineer Amy Marohn at 952-563-4532.

PENN-AMERICAN  
DISTRICT  
PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT  
MOVE FORWARD

After years of planning, the first phase of development is expected to begin at the intersection of Penn Avenue and American Boulevard near Southtown Center.

This prime location will soon be home to a combination of retail, office and residential spaces along tree-shaded streets, attractive for outdoor dining and strolling. This is the vision for the Penn-American District and it’s beginning to take shape. Phase I of the project includes three residential buildings with a mix of townhomes, apartments and retail space at the street level.

United Properties and Stuart Development Corporation of Bloomington have been working with the Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority to finalize plans for the district. The City Council approved the final development plan in November. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring. The plan includes rebuilding the I-494/I-35W interchange and creating a bus rapid transit station on I-35W that will increase transit options and draw businesses and residents to this upcoming neighborhood hub.

For more information, contact HRA Administrator Regina Harris at 952-201-3122 or [rharris@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:rharris@ci.bloomington.mn.us).

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PENN AMERICAN.

WHAT’S DEVELOPING?

HIGHWAY 169 GETS A MAKEOVER  
RECONFIGURE OF HWY. 169/I-494 INTERCHANGE BEGINS

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) recently approved a design-build plan to relieve traffic congestion at the Hwy. 169 and I-494 interchange.

The main cause of the congestion has been attributed to three stoplights along the highway. In 1997, the stretch of Hwy. 169 that runs through Bloomington and Eden Prairie was redesigned to host four lanes of traffic and use stoplights instead of overpasses. In 2005 and 2006, overpasses were constructed at the Pioneer Trail and Bloomington Ferry Road/Anderson Lakes Parkway crossings. Two of the original stoplights have already been replaced. The stoplights that remain are located at Highwood Drive and on either side of the I-494 bridge.

MnDOT recently awarded a contract to a project team lead by C.S. McCrossan and Edward Kraemer and Sons to reconfigure the Hwy. 169 and I-494 crossing. The contractors will remove the stoplights and rebuild the interchange replacing the stoplights with six freeway-to-freeway ramps.

MnDOT, the cities of Bloomington, Edina and Eden Prairie, and the Federal Highway Administration are collaborating on the plan, which has cut project costs by an estimated \$30 million. Ramps will not initially be built between east I-494 and north Hwy. 169 or between south Hwy. 169 and west I-494. These are the least-traveled routes as drivers often use nearby Hwy. 212.

Additionally, six roundabouts will serve as access points to the freeway from surrounding streets and frontage roads. The roundabouts will be spaced evenly around the highway and are intended to reduce the traffic caused by four-way stops.

The major portion of the interchange construction will begin in the spring. Local streets will be accessible throughout construction. The project is required to be completed by August 2013, but the project team has committed to the bulk of the construction being completed by November 2012.

For more information, contact Deputy Director of Public Works Jim Gates at 952-563-8730.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: 169 AND 494 INTERCHANGE.



ANIMAL CONTROL  
CORNER  
KEEP PET INFORMATION CURRENT

Did you know that one in three pets goes missing during its lifetime?

Without proper ID, 90 percent never return home. Although microchips offer the best protection for dogs and cats with a permanent ID that can never be removed, microchips are useless if the identifying information is not current.

If you own a pet with a microchip and have recently changed phone numbers or moved, it’s a good idea to call the microchip company and update your pet’s information.

When an animal is brought to Bloomington Animal Control without identifying tags, a microchip is often the only tool Animal Control Officers have to help them find the pet’s owner.

Ensuring your pet’s information is current can make all the difference if your pet is lost or stolen.

For more information, contact Animal Control Officer Jacob Young at 952-563-4942.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: ANIMAL CONTROL.



*Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it's saving energy or guarding Bloomington's precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...*



PROTECTING OUR NATURAL AREAS  
A STUDY OF BLOOMINGTON'S WETLANDS

The City recently conducted a study to inventory and assess the health of 235 wetland areas in Bloomington. The assessment results will be used to update the functions of the wetlands that are on public lands and easements and aid the City in storm water pond management.

The last time the City conducted a wetlands inventory was in 1997, as part of the *Wetland Protection and Management Plan*. The City supplemented the inventory in 2000 with the wetlands that exist below the Minnesota River bluff line.

Prior to the *Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act of 1991*, there was little regulation of the impacts on wetlands, with many wetlands being drained, filled or excavated. The primary agency that oversees Bloomington's wetlands is the City, although wetland activities are overseen by many agencies, including the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Army Corps of Engineers, and Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, among other watershed districts.

Preliminary results show that the environmental health of Bloomington's wetlands has not significantly changed since 1991. Official results and a report will be available to view on the City's website in the spring.

For more information, contact Bloomington Civil Engineer Steve Segar at 952-563-4533.

EARTH ACTION HEROES  
QUILTING ANGELS

Every Tuesday and Friday morning, a group of women gather around sewing machines in a small room at Creekside. They drink coffee, chat about their families and sew quilts – lots of quilts.

Surrounded by heaps of donated fabric, batting and thread, under the glow of fluorescent lights, they sew.

The quilting group began in 1989, yet most of the 12 members, including Arline Jakeman, Ellen Henning, Mary Lou Tracy, Jan Johnson and Vieno Macewicz have been “regulars” at Creekside since the early 1980s.

Most in the group grew up sewing, having had mothers or friends who taught them to sew. Lest any of them were to forget those early lessons, high school home economics served as a refresher.

Arline Jakeman remembers that sewing was more than a chore; it was a way of life.



“I grew up on a farm with eight other kids and my mom sewed all our clothes,” Jakeman said.

“When I was old enough she taught me to sew

and embroider. I sewed all my kids’ clothes and diapers, too. In those days, we didn’t throw anything away.”

Macewicz, one of the founding members of the group, started visiting Creekside in 1973.

“It was unheard of to throw anything out. I sewed clothes for all six of my kids,” Macewicz said.

All of the women still sew for children, although not their own. Many of the quilts they sew go to the Minneapolis-based Sewing Angels, an organization that distributes quilts to local children’s hospitals. Nearly every item they sew is given away. Some of the group’s benefactors have included Bridging, Inc., Martin Luther Manor, Cornerstone and the Veteran’s Hospital.

What the women don’t donate goes to the “free table” at Creekside.

“I estimate we produce about 20 quilts a month,” Jakeman said. “We donate them all.”

Individually, each member recycles and conserves resources at home, too, from paper to water to plastic bottle caps.

Jan Johnson, a member of the group since 2002, saves all of her plastic



bottle tops and brings them to an Aveda cosmetics store that recycles them.

“Too much gets thrown out,” Johnson said. “The landfills are too full. I’m always shocked when I see an aluminum can in a regular trash bin. I’ll pick it out and put it in the recycling.”

Even the sewing machines the women use to make their quilts are recycled.

“We’ve had nine machines donated to us over the years,” Jakeman said. “And almost every day someone brings us a donation of batting or yarn. We rarely, if ever, buy any materials new. It’s just the way we were brought up.”

To make a donation of batting or fabric to the Creekside quilting group, visit Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South, or call 952-563-4944.

THINK SPRING!

2011 CITYWIDE CURBSIDE CLEANUP

GET READY TO DECLUTTER!

The Citywide Curbside Cleanup is right around the corner. **Be sure you’re prepared by setting your materials at the curb before 7 a.m. on your pickup day.**

Seniors and disabled residents should contact their Neighborhood Watch block captains or call Human Services, 952-563-8733, TTY 952-563-8740, for assistance. Requests for assistance must be made at least one week in advance. See the April Briefing for more details.

SCHEDULE, FROM WEST TO EAST	
West of Normandale	Saturday, April 9
France to Normandale	Saturday, April 16
Penn to France	Saturday, April 23
Portland to Penn	Saturday, April 30
East of Portland	Saturday, May 7



RESOLVE TO REUSE AND RECYCLE IN 2011  
TIPS FOR REDUCING WASTE

More than one million tons of trash are created in Hennepin County every year. Here are some easy steps you can take to reduce your waste in 2011:

- Sell, give away or donate usable clothing and household goods.
- Look for less packaging and avoid disposables. At the grocery store, buy in bulk and bring your own bags.

- Take your name off junk mail lists. See the *Hold the Mail* brochure on Hennepin County’s website at [www.hennepin.us](http://www.hennepin.us), keywords: **Reduce waste**.
- Purchase a reusable mug. Have coffee every day? Bring a reusable mug with you to the coffee shop.
- Compost your kitchen scraps. You can compost your fruit and vegetable

scraps, coffee grounds, and egg shells in a backyard compost bin.

- Borrow, rent and shop used.

Before you run to the store to buy a new item, think about how much you will use it.

For more information, visit [www.rethinkrecycling.com](http://www.rethinkrecycling.com).





STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY



RESOURCES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Human Services provides exceptional programs and services to community members of all ages, some of which are described below, but all of which are contained in the Human Services *Community Resource Catalog*. You can learn about housing, financial and health services, recreation opportunities, and more. Pick up your catalog at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road or Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South, or find it online.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: RESOURCE CATALOG.

For more information, call Human Services at 952-563-8733 or TTY 952-563-8740. To sign up for e-mail updates, go to our website, click on [E-Subscribe](#) and subscribe to “Human Services.”

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HUMAN SERVICES.

FREE TAX PREPARATION SERVICES  
HUMAN SERVICES OFFERS INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

Tax assistance will be provided through April 14 to individuals who meet income-qualifying guidelines of \$30,000 or less and \$50,000 or less for families. Help is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

AccountAbility Minnesota will be available to provide tax assistance to qualifying individuals.

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays through April 14.  
Time: 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.  
When: Saturdays through April 16.  
Time: 8:30 am - 1:30 pm.

AARP Tax-Aide will provide free tax preparation services for middle to low income taxpayers, with special attention to people age 60 and older.

When: Mondays and Tuesdays through April 12.  
Time: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Taxpayers with complex tax returns are advised to seek paid tax assistance.

Human Services is partnering with AccountAbility Minnesota and AARP Tax-Aide to make these programs available.

For more information, contact Human Services.



TAX FORMS AVAILABLE

Federal tax forms are available to be photocopied at Creekside.



THIRD ANNUAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP RETREAT  
GROWING TOWARD GREATNESS

Get together with your peers for the Third Annual Youth Leadership Retreat, Friday, February 18, 3 - 8 p.m., at Civic Plaza.

Sponsored by the Human Rights Commission, the event features keynote speaker Omékongo Luhaka wa Dibinga, a motivational speaker who will engage and inspire retreat guests to realize their dreams and grow toward their greatness.

For more information, call 952-563-8733.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: YOUTH RETREAT.



A SWEET TREAT  
CELEBRATE VALENTINE’S DAY AT CREEKSIDE

Join Human Services for a Valentine’s Day party, Thursday, February 10, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., at Creekside Community Center.

A delicious lunch will be provided with entertainment by The Renegades.

To register, call 952-563-4948 or 952-563-4944 V/TTY, e-mail [reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us) or visit Human Services at Creekside.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER  
CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY AND SERVE OTHERS

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

– Anne Frank

Whether it is important to you to solve a community problem, advance a worthy cause or develop as a person, volunteering offers countless benefits.

Don’t wait to improve your community. By becoming a Bloomington volunteer, in exchange for the gift of your time and expertise, you will meet new people, build your résumé, serve the community and feel good about yourself.

Not sure where to volunteer your time? Human Services offers a variety of opportunities to work with youth, families, multicultural communities, seniors 55 and older, and people with disabilities. The possibilities are endless.

To get involved, visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: VOLUNTEERING.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

CELEBRATING THE YEAR OF THE RABBIT  
WITH JAPANESE CULTURE, CUISINE AND MORE

Enjoy a deliciously authentic Japanese meal, live entertainment and a silent auction at the annual Taste of Japan dinner, Saturday, March 19, at the Bloomington Hilton, 3900 American Boulevard West. During this year’s silent auction you will have the chance to bid on more than 100 items.

This annual event is a fundraiser for Bloomington’s Sister City Organization (BSCO). Tickets are \$55 for adults and \$25 for students. BSCO members pay \$50 for adults and \$20 for students. For information, visit [www.bloomington-izumi.org](http://www.bloomington-izumi.org).



GOING FOR THE GOLD  
BLOOMINGTON RUNNERS COMPETE IN JAPAN

Bloomington residents Darrell Christensen and Rachael Moench will soon be packing their bags for Izumi City, Japan, where they will compete in the 2011 Senshu International Marathon on Sunday, February 20.

Christensen began his running career after he retired in 2000. Since then, he has completed 14 marathons and doesn’t show signs of stopping.

Rachael Moench recently competed in the Twin Cities Marathon. This is her first international marathon.

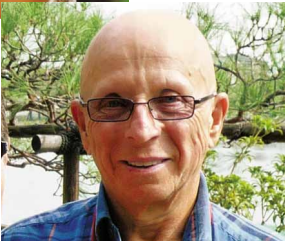
Each year, two runners are selected by the Bloomington Sister City Organization as part of a cultural exchange between Bloomington and Izumi City, Japan. Since 1997, the program has sent 20 Bloomington runners to Japan. The 26.2-mile international marathon invites runners from all over the world to compete.

For more information on the marathon exchange program, call 952-563-8713, TTY 952-563-8740 or visit [www.bloomington-izumi.org](http://www.bloomington-izumi.org).

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SENSHU MARATHON.



Rachael Moench, left. Daniell Christensen, below.



GLOBAL VENDORS SOUGHT  
CELEBRATION BRINGS WORLD CULTURES TOGETHER

World cultural crafters, artists, entertainers and food vendors are needed for the 4th Annual Global Celebration. This cultural kaleidoscope of entertainment, exhibits, food and children’s activities takes place at Civic Plaza, Saturday, June 25.

For more information or to obtain a vendor application call 952-563-8733 or TTY 952-563-8740.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: GLOBAL CELEBRATION.





Contact Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877 for more information on these events.

## ADULT SPORTS

### BATTER UP! PLAY AMERICA’S FAVORITE GAME



Registrations are being accepted for summer adult softball leagues, including men’s, men’s fast pitch, women’s and co-rec. **Beginning April 29**, more than 300 teams will compete throughout the summer and fall at recreational and competitive levels.

Leagues are hosted at Dred Scott, 10820 Bloomington Ferry Road, and Valley View, 9000 Portland Avenue South, playfields. Leagues are for adults, ages 18 and older. Single game leagues play 10 games a season and double-header leagues play 20 games a season.

All teams are sanctioned in the ASA and USSSA.

For more information, contact Jason Hicks at 952-563-8880 or e-mail [jhicks@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:jhicks@ci.bloomington.mn.us).

When: Monday - Friday, starting April 29.

Cost: \$555 + tax, per team, Single Game Leagues.  
\$785 + tax, per team, Double Header Leagues.

Deadline: March 11.

### IMPROVE YOUR PITCH FREE PITCHING CLINICS OFFERED

Free pitching clinics are available to all Bloomington Fastpitch Association pitchers now through March 29. Clinics take place 6 - 7 p.m. and 7 - 8 p.m., at Valley View Middle School, 8900 Portland Avenue South, **February 8 and 15, and March 1 and 8**. Clinics at Valley View Elementary School are **March 15, 22 and 29**.

Pitchers should bring their own catchers to the clinics.

For more information, visit [bloomingtonfastpitchmn.com](http://bloomingtonfastpitchmn.com).

### BORN AGAIN JOCKS ENJOY INDOOR VOLLEYBALL



The Born Again Jocks volleyball league welcomes men, 55 years and older, of all skill levels, to enjoy volleyball at Jefferson High School, 4001 West 102nd Street.

For more information, contact Don Wilkie at 952-884-2146 or Don Wagoner at [doje65@netzero.net](mailto:doje65@netzero.net).

## PARKS AND RECREATION



### THE HUNT IS ON! ANNUAL FAMILY EVENT IS SURE TO PLEASE

Kids, age eight and under, won’t want to miss this “eggs”traordinary annual event sponsored by Bloomington Parks and Recreation and the Bloomington Breakfast Optimist Club. While you’re there, check out the family fun walk and informational booths.

When: Saturday, April 23, 9:30 a.m. - noon.

Where: Normandale Lake Bandshell, 5901 West 84th Street

Time: Hunt begins 11 a.m.



**FLIP OUT!  
GYMNASTICS PROGRAM COMBINES FITNESS WITH FUN**

## DREAMING OF WARMER DAYS

### BLOOMINGTON FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER (BFAC) DISCOUNTED SEASON PASSES FOR RESIDENTS

Buy your BFAC resident season pass before April 14 and receive \$2 off. Purchase your pass prior to June 11 and receive \$1 off. If you bring your old pass to be reactivated, you’ll receive an additional dollar off. Passes are sold at the Parks and Recreation counter at Civic Plaza through June 10. Beginning June 8, passes will be available daily, 4 - 7 p.m., at the BFAC, 301 East 90th Street. The BFAC is open **June 11 - August 21** and weekends through Labor Day.



#### 2011 RESIDENT SEASON PASS (PRICES INCLUDE TAX)

Infant, age 1 and under	Free
Child, age 2 - 10	\$15.75
Young adult, age 11 - 15	\$26.75
Adult, age 16 - 54	\$49
Senior, age 55 and up	\$15.75

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: AQUATIC CENTER.**

### SUPER SATURDAY SIGN-UP FOR SUMMER SPECTRUM

Register for youth programs online or in person on Super Sign-Up Saturday. Look for more details in the Summer Spectrum 2011 program brochure.

When: Saturday, March 12, 9 - 10 a.m.

Where: Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SUMMER SPECTRUM.**



l’il Flipsters Gymnastics is back again for children, ages 30 months to kindergarten. This mobile gymnastics organization provides gymnastics training and motor skill development in a safe and fun environment.

New sessions begin every month through May 2011.

Classes are held at Bloomington Ice Garden, 3600 West 98th Street, Tuesday and Friday mornings and afternoons. Classes are \$27 per three-week session and \$36 for a four-week session.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: FLIPSTERS.**

## MAJOR TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION COMING SOON IMPROVEMENTS WILL CONNECT BUSH LAKE PARKS

The trails around Bloomington’s biggest lake are about to get a much-needed facelift. Nearly three miles of paved trails will be reconstructed or paved. A new trail connecting East and West Bush Lake parks will be added along Bush Lake’s southeast shore. *See map.*

The trails will also be widened to be more pedestrian-friendly while, at the same time, accommodate multiple modes of transportation including wheelchairs and bicycles.

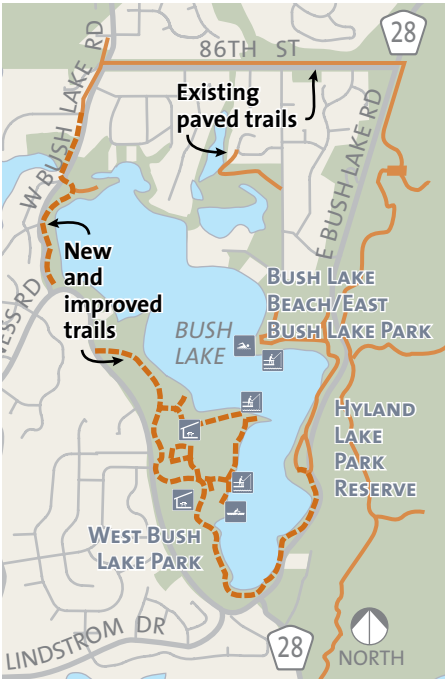
“We have well-used trails, they’re loved, and they’re getting a little worn in places,” Parks and Recreation Manager Randy Quale said. “From a recreational and health standpoint, this is a big priority. People want to walk and bike, walk their dogs, and go out on these trails.”



Last November, the City Council awarded a contract to Northwest Asphalt to make the trail improvements around Bush Lake, part of the Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Regional Park Reserve. Work on the trails is expected to begin in the spring and be completed by late June.

The trail improvements are funded by grants from the Metropolitan Council, State of Minnesota and the Statewide Health Improvement Program. The project was bid out in late 2010. Bids came in significantly under original estimates, perhaps as a result of the current economic downturn.

For more information, contact Senior Civil Engineer Julie Long at [jlong@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:jlong@ci.bloomington.mn.us) or 952-563-4865.





CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Located in Bloomington Civic Plaza at the corner of West 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road, the Center for the Arts is a first-class facility housing six arts organizations. For facility information, call 952-563-8889. For exhibit information and events, visit [www.bloomingtonartcenter.com](http://www.bloomingtonartcenter.com) and click on Exhibitions, or call 952-563-8567.

GALLERY HOURS

Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
Sa 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Su 1 - 10 p.m.

For all theater tickets, call the Box Office at 952-563-8575.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS:  
CENTER FOR THE ARTS.

SCHNEIDER THEATER



SONGS OF ALEC WILDER

Laura Caviani, Gordy Johnson, Phil Hey and Gwen Anderson present the songs of the great Alec Wilder, **Sunday, February 20, 2 p.m.** Tickets are \$25 adults; \$19 students/seniors.

MEDALIST CONCERT BAND SUPPORTS LOAVES & FISHES

The Medalist Band ended 2010 on a high note with its first annual holiday benefit concert. The December 2010 “Sounds of the Season” concert raised more than \$600 for Loaves & Fishes, a nonprofit organization that brings nutritious meals to those in need in the Twin Cities. The Valley West Cub Foods donated refreshments for the show.



The Medalist Band’s next concert, **At the Circus**, features the works of Karl King, Harry L. Alford, Henry Filmore and others, **Sunday, March 6, 4 p.m.** Tickets are \$12 adults; \$10 students/seniors.



2010 TASTE OF CHOCOLATE WINNER  
“The Jewel” chocolate truffle cake by McCormick & Schmick’s Seafood Restaurant, Edina.

INEZ GREENBERG GALLERY

CERAMIC EXHIBITION



Curated by artist Steve Hemingway, the Ceramic Exhibition runs **February 25 - April 8.** Featured artists include Allison Bohlke, Kate Christopher, Marko Fields, Norman Holen, Peter Jadoonath, Laurie Landry, Deb LeAir, Robin Murphy, Jef Raasch and Lazare Rottach. Sponsored by the Home Depot.

ATRIUM GALLERY

NARRA(INTERVEN)TIONS

*Narra(interven)tions* by artist Micah Bloom, featuring oil and egg tempera paintings that investigate the relationships between domestic harmony and impersonal living spaces, runs **through March 6.**

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

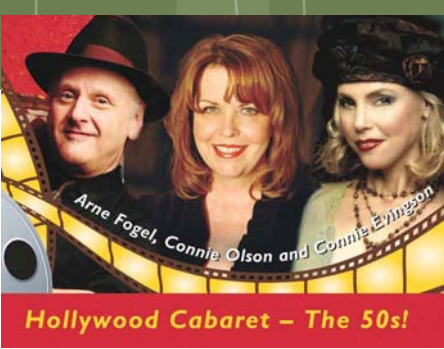
The paintings of Barbara Thill Anderson will be featured in the Atrium Gallery, **March 10 - May 1.**

BLACK BOX THEATER

HOLLYWOOD CABARET THE 40s!

Musical director Rick Carlson presents the classic Hollywood songs of the 1940s, featuring Arne Fogel, Maud Hixson and Jennifer Eckes, **Saturday, February 26, 7:30 p.m.**, and **Sunday, February 27, 2 p.m.**

Hollywood Cabaret tickets are \$18 adults, \$16 students/seniors.



Musical director Tanner Taylor presents classic songs of the 1950s, featuring Arne Fogel, Connie Olson and Connie Evingson, **Saturday, March 26, 7:30 p.m.**, and **Sunday, March 27, 2 p.m.**



GET YOUR PASSPORT AT CIVIC PLAZA CITY MAKES TRAVEL PLANNING EASY

Are there travel plans in your future? Perhaps a spring break trip or vacation overseas? The City Clerk’s Office, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, is a designated Passport Acceptance Facility. Passport applications, passport photo services and more are available. For more information, call 952-563-4923 or visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS:  
PASSPORT SERVICES.



PLAN YOUR GETAWAY

ON PATROL THE ART OF SAFE TRAVEL

The last thing you want to think about while on vacation is the possibility of falling victim to a crime, which is exactly why criminals target travelers. Travelers are often relaxed, unsuspecting and much less conscious of their surroundings when traveling in a new place. Although only three percent of travelers become victims of crime, these crimes can range in severity from simple theft to kidnapping. If you plan on traveling, be sure to follow these safety tips:

- To fool criminals, carry a “throw-away” wallet and keep valuables in a travel pouch around your neck. In the throw-away wallet keep an expired credit card and a small amount of cash.
- Carry your medication with you, not in your checked luggage.
- Make extra copies of your passport, airline tickets and hotel information. Give copies to a trusted friend at home.
- Book transportation from the airport before you leave home. Hotel shuttles and mainline taxis can confirm prices prior to your arrival.
- Dress to blend in. Leave expensive jewelry at home. Thieves target people who look like they have money.
- Learn about where you are visiting before you arrive – there may be cultural differences or clothing taboos. Try to not stand out as the tourist from America.

For additional tips and information, visit [www.safe-travels.com](http://www.safe-travels.com).



Sunday, March 13, 1 - 5 p.m.  
Bloomington Center for the Arts  
1800 West Old Shakopee Road

Taste of Chocolate is an annual dessert competition and benefit for Bloomington arts organizations, presented in partnership with the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by *Minnesota Monthly*, Kraus Anderson, Destination Bloomington, Larkin Hoffman Attorneys, Mall of America, The Toro Company and HealthPartners.

Enjoy delectable chocolates by chefs and chocolatiers, entertainment, a silent auction and a raffle drawing for extraordinary prizes. Tickets are \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door. Early admission (12 - 1 p.m.) costs an additional \$10 per ticket. To purchase tickets, stop by the Bloomington Center for the Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, call 952-563-8562 or visit [www.tasteofchocolate.org](http://www.tasteofchocolate.org).

FEATURING CHOCOLATES BY

- Creative Confectionaire.
- Ganache: Truffles for Every Occasion.
- Groveland Confections.
- Jason’s Deli, Eden Prairie.
- McCormick and Schmick’s Seafood Restaurant, Edina.
- Obrigadeiro.
- Obsession Chocolates.
- Pardon My French Bakery, Café and Wine Bar.
- Patisserie Margo.
- The Art Institutes International of Minnesota.
- The Sweet Swede Candy Shoppe.
- Thomasina’s Cashew Brittle.

For more information, call Bloomington Fine Arts Council at 952-563-8567 or visit [www.bloomingtonfinearts.com](http://www.bloomingtonfinearts.com).





IMPROVING PHYSICAL FITNESS AND NUTRITION PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE

In 2010, Bloomington Public Improvement Plan (SHIP) created a vision for a healthier Bloomington. The aim was to engage the community in making lasting changes to support healthy lifestyles. Since then, many groups have worked together to make this vision a reality. Bloomington has already begun to make positive changes through the program, including:

- Improving 86th Street, making it safer and more bike and pedestrian friendly.
- Adding 19 bike rack sets in locations around the city to accommodate 100 more bicycles.
- Implementing active recess and after-school programs at Oak Grove, Westwood, Indian Mounds and Ridgeview elementary schools.
- Adding gardens to the landscape at Poplar Bridge elementary and Oak Grove middle schools.
- Improving physical activity and nutrition programs at 22 child care centers and preschools.

For more information about SHIP, visit the City’s website and subscribe to the SHIP newsletter.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: SHIP.

PLAY EVERY DAY PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLES



Getting enough exercise is just as important for young children as it is for adults. Early and regular physical activity establishes a pattern for lifelong health and promotes brain development and school readiness. For children who spend much of their time in child care centers or preschools, getting enough exercise may depend on child care center or preschool staff. Bloomington Public Health, through the SHIP program, can help child care professionals add physical activity to their everyday curriculum through the *I Am Moving, I Am Learning* workshop. The program has helped countless child care centers and preschools add more physical activity to their daily routines.

Parents also play a role in keeping kids active. For ideas and workbooks to help keep your kids get their daily dose of exercise, visit the City’s website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HELP PROGRAM.

MEET A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER GETTING TO KNOW TODD ANGUS

City of Bloomington employee and volunteer firefighter, Todd Angus, shares what it’s like to balance work, family and firefighting.

How long have you been active in the Bloomington Fire Department (BFD)?

I’ve been a volunteer firefighter for almost 15 years.

How many hours a week are you “on call”?

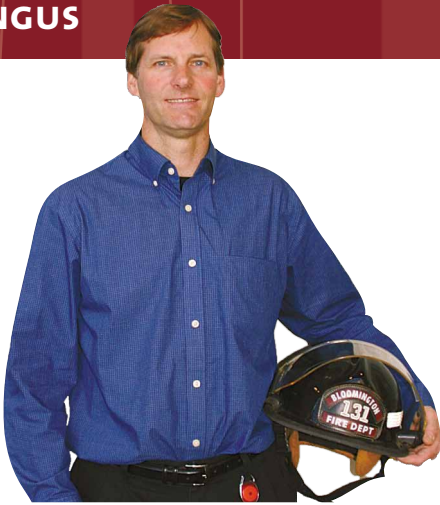
While I’m in Bloomington, I always carry my pager. I’m always on call except when I’m working or out of town. Needless to say, it’s an unpredictable schedule.

Is anyone else in your family a firefighter?

Years ago, my father-in-law was a volunteer firefighter in Green Isle, Minnesota. They called themselves the “Fighting Irish.”

What is the biggest challenge you’ve faced?

The biggest challenge for me is balancing my time. Especially when my kids were little, it was hard to work full time and always be on call. Not to mention, I was trying to be a good husband, too!



Do you have a “scariest moment” you can share with us?

I have been in my share of fires, but I’ve never felt scared. I attribute this to good equipment, good training and good leadership. I’m also lucky that no major structure, like a high rise office tower, has gone up in flame. Fighting a fire like that may raise the hair on my neck.

Any interesting tidbits you could offer that people may not know about you?

I grew up in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, and lived for a time in Omaha, Nevada, and Colorado Springs, Colorado. I never thought I would live in the “big city” and now I can’t imagine living anywhere else!



BECOME A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER

Bloomington’s volunteer firefighters include accountants, insurance sales people, computer technicians, mechanics, stay-at-home parents and the self-employed.

Visit our website for more information on making a difference by becoming a volunteer firefighter.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FIRE VOLUNTEERS.

TIME TO PLANT SOME TREES ANNUAL TREE SALE ADDS HUNDREDS OF TREES TO LANDSCAPE

Each year, the City plants trees in parks and other public areas to ensure that Bloomington’s urban forest continues to be one of the community’s treasures. In fact, the City has planted more than 1,000 trees over the last few years. To increase the number of trees on private properties, Park Maintenance holds a public tree sale. Based on last year’s sales, 280 trees will be available for purchase this spring.

TREE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. All trees are bare root, one-and-a-quarter to one-and-a-half inches in diameter and cost \$50 each. *Trees are not guaranteed.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in number of each tree type desired. Maximum 5 trees total per household, \$50 each. Check must accompany order.

\_\_\_\_\_ Autumn Blaze red maple

\_\_\_\_\_ Hackberry

\_\_\_\_\_ Northwood red maple

\_\_\_\_\_ River birch

\_\_\_\_\_ Green Mountain sugar maple

\_\_\_\_\_ Imperial honeylocust

\_\_\_\_\_ Prairie Fire crab apple

\_\_\_\_\_ Snowdrift crab apple

Total trees \_\_\_\_\_ X \$50 ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost

Pick up trees at 1800 West Old Shakopee Road on **Saturday, May 7, 9 - 11 a.m.**

Send check and form to City of Bloomington, Park Maintenance, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027.

SMOKERS FIRE SAFETY 101 SMOKING IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF HOME FIRE DEATHS



Each year the Bloomington Fire Department is called to fires caused by careless smoking. Fires caused by cigarettes and other smoking materials can be prevented by following seven action steps:

- Smoke outside. Most home fires caused by smoking start inside the home.
- Use deep ashtrays with wide, stable bases that are harder to tip over.
- Make sure cigarettes and ashes are completely stubbed out in an ashtray. Soak cigarette butts and ashes in water before throwing them away.
- Don’t put ashtrays on chairs because they can quickly catch fire.
- Never smoke in a home where oxygen is used. Oxygen can be explosive and makes fires burn hotter and faster.
- Use fire-safe cigarettes. They are less likely to cause fires because they have a reduced propensity to burn when left unattended.
- Be alert. If you are sleepy, have been drinking alcohol or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy, don’t smoke. Never smoke in bed.

Lastly, whether you smoke in your home or not, having properly maintained smoke alarms on every level of your home is critical. Test alarms frequently and change batteries at least once every year.

For more information, contact Bloomington Fire Prevention at 952-563-8933 or Fire Marshal Gene Dugal at 952-563-8967.



The City’s annual tree sale will provide a variety of tree species again this year, including: Autumn Blaze red maple, Green Mountain sugar maple, Hackberry, Imperial honeylocust, Northwood red maple, Prairie Fire crab apple, River birch, and Snowdrift crab apple.

Orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Trees are not guaranteed. Visit our website for more information and a printable order form.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: TREE SALE.